

Claims

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A method of matching vehicle ratings to rental
 equipment using a central database, comprising:
 storing vehicle information and rental equipment
 information in the central database;
 providing a website for a user to specify a
10 description of a vehicle;
 searching the central database based on the
 description of the vehicle to find related vehicle
 information;
 identifying rental equipment in the central database
15 which is compatible with the vehicle by a comparison of
 the rental equipment information to the vehicle
 information; and
 displaying the compatible rental equipment on the
 website.
20 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the description of the
 vehicle includes make, model, and year of the vehicle.

 3. The method of claim 2 further including the step of
25 providing a webpage to enter the make, model, and year of
 the vehicle.

 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the vehicle
 information in the central database includes physical
30 characteristics of the vehicle.

 5. The method of claim 4 wherein the physical
 characteristics of the vehicle include height, width,
 length, weight, and ground clearance.

6. The method of claim 4 wherein the physical characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical characteristics of the rental equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle and the rental equipment.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the central database resides on a first computer system.

8. The method of claim 7 further including:
entering the description of the vehicle on a second computer system remote from the first computer system;
sending the description of the vehicle to the first computer system through a communication network;
sending a listing of the compatible rental equipment to the second computer system through the communication network; and
displaying the listing of the compatible rental equipment on the second computer system.

9. The method of claim 8 further including:
determining a need for additional information based on a search of the central database with the description of the vehicle; and
requesting the additional information from a user operating the second computer system.

10. A method of matching vehicle information to equipment, comprising:
receiving a description of a vehicle from a user;
searching a central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle information;

identifying equipment in the central database which
is compatible with the vehicle by a comparison of the
equipment to the vehicle information; and

5 sending a listing of the compatible equipment to the
user.

11. The method of claim 10 further including the step of
storing vehicle information and equipment information on
the central database.

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12. The method of claim 10 further including the step of
providing a website for the user to specify the
description of the vehicle.

13. The method of claim 12 further including the step of
displaying the compatible rental equipment on the website
for the user.

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14. The method of claim 10 wherein the description of
the vehicle includes make, model, and year of the
vehicle.

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15. The method of claim 10 wherein the vehicle
information in the central database includes physical
characteristics of the vehicle.

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16. The method of claim 15 wherein the physical
characteristics of the vehicle include height, width,
length, weight, and ground clearance.

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17. The method of claim 15 wherein the physical
characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical
characteristics of the equipment to determine
compatibility between the vehicle and the equipment.

18. The method of claim 10 wherein the central database resides on a first computer system.

5 19. The method of claim 18 further including:
entering the description of the vehicle on a second computer system remote from the first computer system;

sending the description of the vehicle to the first computer system through a communication network;

10 sending a listing of the compatible equipment to the second computer system through the communication network;
and

displaying the listing of the compatible equipment on the second computer system.

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20. The method of claim 19 further including:

determining a need for additional information based on a search of the central database with the description of the vehicle; and

20 requesting the additional information from the user operating the second computer system.

21. A method of matching a vehicle with rental equipment, comprising:

25 storing vehicle information and rental equipment information in a central database;

receiving a description of a vehicle from a website;

searching the central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle

30 information;

identifying rental equipment which is compatible with the vehicle by a comparison of the rental equipment information to the vehicle information; and

displaying the compatible rental equipment on the

website.

5 22. The method of claim 21 wherein the description of the vehicle includes make, model, and year of the vehicle.

10 23. The method of claim 21 wherein the vehicle information in the central database includes physical characteristics of the vehicle.

15 24. The method of claim 23 wherein the physical characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical characteristics of the rental equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle and the rental equipment.

25. A computer system, comprising:
means for storing vehicle information and equipment information in a central database;
20 means for providing a website;
means for receiving a description of a vehicle;
means for searching the central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle information;
25 means for identifying rental equipment in the central database which is compatible with the vehicle as determined by a comparison of the rental equipment to the vehicle information; and
means for displaying the compatible rental equipment
30 on the website.

26. The computer system of claim 25 wherein the vehicle information in the central database includes physical characteristics of the vehicle.

27. The computer system of claim 26 wherein the physical characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical characteristics of the rental equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle and the rental equipment

28. The computer system of claim 25 wherein the central database resides on a first computer system.

29. The computer system of claim 28 further including:
means for entering the description of the vehicle on a second computer system remote from the first computer system;

means for sending the description of the vehicle to the first computer system through a communication network;

means for sending a listing of the compatible equipment to the second computer system through the communication network; and

means for displaying the listing of the compatible equipment on the second computer system.

30. A mass storage device, comprising:

means for storing vehicle information and equipment information in a central database;

means for providing a website;

means for receiving a description of a vehicle;

means for searching the central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle information;

means for identifying rental equipment in the central database which is compatible with the vehicle as determined by a comparison of the rental equipment to the

vehicle information; and

means for displaying the compatible rental equipment
on the website.

- 5 31. The mass storage device of claim 30 wherein the
vehicle information in the central database includes
physical characteristics of the vehicle which are
compared to physical characteristics of the rental
equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle
10 and the rental equipment.